DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 103 616 CE 003 210

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TITLE The New Partnership--Academia and the World of Work.
PUB DATE 74
NOTE 14p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the College Entrance Examination Board (Washington, D. C., October 1974)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS Career Education; *Cooperative Planning; *Educational Change; Educational Needs; Educational Planning; Employment Problems; *Government Role; *Manpower Development; Occupational Guidance; *School Industry Relationship; Social Values; Speeches; Youth Employment

ABSTRACT

President Ford's pledge to bring education and employers together in a new climate of credibility requires the cooperative planning of the Departments of Health, Education, and Welfare; Commerce; and Labor. Sidney P. Marland's idea of career education is receiving a new thrust. The concept of completing an education within a certain time span is out-dated. Proper emotional preparation for work as well as goal-centered plans for today's youth will involve planning from business, industry, and education. Proper occupational guidance is a basic need; career education will expose the world of work to students in the early years of their formal education. The idea of work must be central to education, and young people must be trained to think in terms of employment, yet never losing recognition of the fact that it is the individual's view of his productivity that is fundamental to the career education concept. The cooperation of the three Federal departments is an illustration of Federal leadership to hasten cooperative efforts at the local level to develop in young Americans a sense of what work means, skill in decision making to prepare for work, and ability to find a job. (Author/AG)

ED103616

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THE NEW PARTNERSHIP - ACADEMIA AND THE WORLD OF WORK*

by
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U.S. Commissioner of Education

With the special clearsightedness of one in a new job, President Ford has managed to bring together three executive departments to work in new ways to match people to choice of lifework....and ultimately to adapt varieties of lifework to the needs of the country.

The initiatives suggested by the President in his August speech at Ohio State University require the collaboration of the best planners of DHEW, the Department of Commerce, and the Department of Labor. Already those planners, divided into 10 task forces, are pooling ideas on how to synchronize the world of work more closely with the schools and colleges.

In the past schools and colleges have tended to set themselves apart from the world of business and industry--unless they were seeking money for scholarships or buildings. Economic and business institutions, on their part, often seemed to be interested in education as a source of secretaries or management trainees and, occasionally, professorial talents to grace a committee and add prestige to a letterhead.

These attitudes have been tired old hat--or old blue jeans, if you will--for some time. And the President's speech has made them seem even more tired.

Just what did the President say? He said:

"Your professors tell you that education unlocks creative genius and imagination and that you must develop your human potential..."

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* Prepared for Annual Meeting of the College Entrance Examination Board; Washington-Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C., October 29, 1974, 12:00 Noon.

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"You spend four years in school, graduate, go into the job market and are told the rules have changed. There is no longer a demand for your speciality...another educational discipline is now required. And so one or two more years of study follows, and you return again to the job market. Yes, what you now offer is saleable except that competition is severe. To succeed, you must acquire further credentials. So you go back to the university and ultimately emerge with a Master's or even a Ph.D. and you know what happens next? You go out to look for a job...and NOW they say you're over-qualified.

"Although this Administration will not make promises it cannot keep, I do want to pledge one thing to you here and now: I will do everything in my power to bring education and employers together in a new climate of credibility--an atmosphere in which universities turn scholars out and employers turn them on.

"...I propose a great new partnership of labor and academia. Why can't the universities of America open their doors to working men and women, not only as students but also as teachers? Practical problem solvers can contribute much to education, whether or not they hold degrees. The fact of the matter is that education is being strangled--by degrees.

...What good is training if it is not applied to jobs? What good are factories if they are shut down? What good is business and industry without those who solve their problems, perform their jobs, and spend their paychecks?"

President Ford could not have been unaware of what your distinguished CEEB President had to say. Former Commissioner Sidney P. Marland's work in spreading the idea of career education across the country started in 1971. Sid's basic theory was that, whatever the level at which a young person left school, he or she would leave with a skill that could be used in the marketplace.

Sid's idea caught fire and, with President Ford's emphasis, the national organization of resources for career education is receiving a new thrust. Meanwhile, there are a lot of young people out there who were just born too early; they are walking around wondering how to get a handhold on work that will still be "in fashion" in 1980 and beyond, and that will start by earning them a living today. As President Ford reported, he found the dominant mood of this year's graduates was: "How can I get a job that makes sense as well as money?"

We should not underestimate the problems of the young. Unemployment among Americans between the ages of 16 and 24 right now is around 2.7 million, more than half of the total 5.2 million unemployed. It should give pause to every educator to realize that, even in today's economy, jobs are looking for young people at the same time that young people are looking for jobs.

These figures are particularly striking in a country that has traditionally worshipped youth and the possibilities inherent in its young people. The paradox in them is that while young people have not tuned in precisely enough during their school years to the needs of an adult work life, many of them still have overvalued the market value of education. For more than one affluent decade, credentials have been piled on for their own sake. The surfeit of credentials has led to needless requirements of ever higher credentials for the same work, according to a study called WORK IN AMERICA made by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

A great many studies indicate that education cannot be thought of as a period of years set off from the rest of living and having little relation to adulthood as a worker. The challenge of jobs now available to those with high credentials has failed to increase in proportion to the increased attainments and heightened aspirations of the young. Our Department of Health, Education, and Welfare study showed that the expansion of professional, technical, and clerical jobs in the past few years absorbed only 15 percent of the new educated workers. The remaining 85 percent accepted jobs previously performed by individuals with fewer credentials.

So it is not surprising that in a study of college-bound high school seniors in 1973 and 1974 by your College Entrance Examination Board <u>one out of four</u> seniors was reported undecided as to how much he or she really wanted. Undecided students formed a higher percentage

of graduates than any other group except those bound for the top four fields of study--biological sciences, business, health related majors, and the social sciences. And the number of undecided students increases each year.

There is no mystery in this. The cost of preparation for a lifework is higher today than ever, and it is expensive and time-consuming to take the wrong turn. Most young people are not cued in to the available choices and the needs of the future. For instance, when most people think of a career in "the arts," they usually think of activities that will carry with them glamour and renown...of becoming a famous painter or sculptor, a dancer or musician. Yet a serious artist might make a good--and distinguished--living as a book designer, a display designer, an industrial or fabric designer...and paint for pleasure and possible renown in the spare time that his or her talent earned.

The lack of emotional preparation for work as well as goal-centered plans on the part of the young call for new planning from the business-industry community as well as from centers of education. Better educated young people, growing up during an easy time, are facing totally unfamiliar pressures. Nevertheless, the promise of a good salary is no longer enough. A recent young woman college graduate who was interviewed for the WORK IN AMERICA study, said:

> "I didn't go to school for four years to type. I'm bored; continuously humiliated. They sent me to Xerox school for three hours...I realize that I sound cocky, but after you've been in

the academic world, after you've had your own class (as a student teacher) and made your own plans, and someone tries to teach you to push a button, you get pretty mad. They even gave me a gold-plated plaque to show I've learned how to use the machine."

The ratio of pupils to guidance counselors in high schools is about 500 to 1, and therefore counselors these days are more burdened with the social problems of abortion and drugs than with counseling for lifework. Yet every study and survey points to the overriding concern with helping individuals, young and old, find meaningful work that offers opportunity for growth, with the prospect that job search and retraining may have to be repeated at least five times in every lifetime.

Career education as inaugurated by Sid Marland in 1971 and now interpreted through career education coordinators in 39 States, at present means many different things to different school and State officials, but in every case the basic premise is endorsed. That premise is that schoolchildren should start to learn about the world of work as early as possible, be given an opportunity to experiment with different kinds of work as much as possible, be introduced to the facts of the working world through those who are actually a part of it. If these things happen, they could then narrow their choices for a first job in high school and go on from there.

Within this context, Dr. Kenneth Hoyt, Associate Commissioner for Career Education of the Office of Education, reports that:

-- Career education programs are operating in all 50 States and six territories.

-- Of the 17,000 school districts in the U.S. approximately 5,000 have initiated some kind of career education program.

-- At least 25 State departments of education have adopted policy statements describing and endorsing career education.

-- At least four State legislatures have passed career education laws.

-- At least three major national opinion polls have produced data indicating strong public support for career education.

-- Many colleges and universities are now teaching graduate courses in career education.

At one time the home was where young people received their first ideas of lifework. They might follow in the steps of their father, or of an admired uncle or family friend. The father might have been a cabinet-maker, but if the family friend was a lawyer a teenager might join in the legal discussions involving a neighbor's land, and this might lead him into the law.

Now homes are way-stations, easy to ride to and easy to leave, with mothers and fathers on different schedules. And the generation gap grows more hurtful as parents and children lose involvement in one another's goals.

But the retraining that will be necessary to career changes of the future may mean a come-back for the home. The concentrated study that will at one time or another involve every member of the family could make it a learning center again. The generations will need to share experiences, without reference to which age is in the teacher's seat, as Junior (he or she) steps from a hospital job to pre-medical training and father struggles to enter

engineering from one of the technical trades...and needs Junior's more recent knowledge of math to do it.

Work in our society is more than an economic need. Although need has brought upwards of 32 million women into the working world, a high proportion of these women are concerned with how they use each day far more than with how much they get paid for each day. This is also still a priority concern of most men.

Work in America is the means whereby a person is tested as well as identified. It is the way a youngster becomes an adult. Work shapes the thoughts and life of the worker. A change in atmosphere and lifestyle can be effected by an individual by simply changing the way he or she makes a living. For most of us in adult life, being without work just is not living.

For all these reasons, the idea of work must be central to education, and young people must be trained to think in terms of employment.

There is some fear what, with the constant encouragement of work values and the breaking down of barriers between school and industry, the education establishment is emphasizing the needs of society rather than those of the individual. However, in breaking with outworn "credentialism," career education has erased the old idea that a person who has to change careers has somehow failed. For, in fact, career education forever stresses the point--as I do now--that career change aiming at full productivity for the individual should be one of the basic tenets of the career education concept.

Printers and construction foremen, dentists and lawyers must be called into the schools from the community--as they have been in 100 school systems sampled by the Office of Education during this past year--to translate their work and their lives to young people. Dr. Hoyt found many positive signs that the collaboration of members of the community with the curriculum of the schools, along with the involvement of local businesses, was working.

Students, Dr. Hoyt found, were going from the school to the community and using it as a learning laboratory. School personnel were receiving in-service education in the business-labor-professional community. Most of the high schools were operating a local job placement program for full and part-time paid and volunteer work.

The Office of Education can also point with pride to the programs, one in each state, that are set up with its support explicitly to familiarize elementary and secondary school students with occupations for which special skills are required, and the requisites for careers in such occupations. They provide students with educational experiences through work, helping them to leave school with initial job placement.

There should surely be no separation of status between those enrolled in the academic and those in the non-academic track in any career education plan. Vocational education students should find it possible to take as many arts and humanities courses as their schedule can handle, and mathematics majors, for example, might well want to enroll in some vocational courses.

A typical Office of Education supported project, in South Portland, Maine, is called REVAMP--which translates to Revitalize Vocational and Academic Programs Through Career Education. It collaborates closely with the nearest vocational-technical institute as well as with the nearby University. All the regular academic courses are focussed on career development and complement vocational courses.

In this project, career awareness is developed in the elementary grades. Career exploration and experiment take place in junior high school. In grades 10 through 14 comprehensive testing is carried on, and then follows broader career exploration through field trips, work experiences, , and work-study programing. This plan prepares a teenager to obtain and hold down a first job and then decide what next step he or she will take...on to college or further development through the work route or technical school. A placement service within the high school's career education center provides part-time, summer, or full-time jobs.

Some vocational education projects include plans for internships in a university in industrial and professional fields. Quite a few offer special programing for the gifted and talented.

The philosophy behind the collaboration of the schools and colleges with the business-labor-professional community rests on at least six assumptions:

1. Education means more than "schooling."
2. Students can and do learn from workers in the community as well as from certified teachers.

3. The best way to prepare students for the real world is to let them experience it.
4. Classroom contact with people from the world of work helps students decide career choices.
5. If employers want young workers ready and willing to work, they have a responsibility to aid in the reading process.
6. The business and labor communities have much to learn from as well as much to contribute to education.

The cooperation of DHEW and the Office of Education with the Departments Commerce and Labor can be seen as Federal leadership to hasten the collaboration of business, labor, the home, and the school or colleges to give young Americans a sense of what work means, how to decide on a field of work and prepare for it, and then, finally, how to find a job.

The specific role of OE will be to provide a package of career education programs which relate education and work. Interchange of teachers between school and industry should also be initiated, based as far as possible on competency based teacher licensing. Teachers from business and finance should be enlisted to teach from their experience in the workings of business and the American economic system.

Better systems of job forecasting, by type of work and geographical area, must be developed by the Department of Labor. Better knowledge of the numbers of workers needed, and job descriptions for those workers, must be collected and circulated. And all the high schools must maintain--

as they do in our sample of 100 communities embarked on Career Education--regular contact with the State employment service and with a local career education advisory council.

To help in the cooperation of the community with the work related education of its young people, community work and education councils should be set up. These councils should include representatives of education, students, business, labor, and the community, and should be headed by one overall national council directed by the President. The main job of the councils would be to ensure that working people on every level take an active part in interpreting their work role to students and that youngsters have choices in trying out the kinds of jobs available in their community.

Perhaps with all this planning the jobs offered to young people will not be the unproductive types that barely justify the minimum pay. In some communities they will be on-the-job training in workplaces made possible through expanded programs of cooperative education or work-study, for both vocational and postsecondary school students.

While we must give the bulk of our attention to young people who now find themseleves cut off from entry into a world they do not understand, some provision must also be made for mid-career changes for adults who want to grow into new situations and need to master new skills for new job probabilities. Such skilled adults might want to become teachers or resource persons to assist in classroom teaching.

One question that remains unanswered is: How much room will be left for pursuit of pure knowledge, or for the arts and humanities that in their beginnings never pay the novitiate a living wage? It is too easy to say that we cannot afford much of this kind of education at the moment, when the country is coping with inflation and economic crisis. Every civilization--and especially ours at present--needs philosophers and artists, writers and musicians, and these special people will not grow on part-time work and part-time study.

We must see to it that job satisfaction is not the only pay for those who go into self-training in these fields--for self-training is what it always is.

Our plan is to see that every individual can develop his own potential, with accomplishment of the individual's dream also becoming the responsibility of the community--a new kind of partnership between education and the world of work.

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